

**WORKFORCE PARTNERSHP OF GREATER RHODE ISLAND
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
JANUARY 15, 2008**

MINUTES

Members Present:

**Everett Amaral Alexis Devine Cynthia Farrell
Scott Seaback Susan O'Donnell Steven Kitchin
Betty Pleacher Pat Talin Steven Wilson
Nancy Roderick Joseph Cannon Andrew Tyska
Alan Durand Raymond Pingitore Jane Nugent
Paul Harden Michael Cassidy Christine Grieco
Kimberly Weiss Joseph DesRoches Raymond Filippone
Johan Uvin Vanessa Cooley Joe DeSantis
Bob Cooper**

Members Absent:

**Ernie Vergano Fred Ricci Diane Karcz
Paul Ouellette John Iaderosa Etelvina Leite
Fred Pendlebury Peter Koch Dottie Mattiello
Vincent Balasco Joseph Crowley Diane Cook
Joan D'Agostino Joseph DiPina Edward Sneesby
Darrell Waldron**

Guests Present:

John O'Hare Kathy Partington Marie DeRoche

Staff Present:

Dottie Miller Nick Ucci Arthur Jodoin

Carlos Ribeiro Maureen Palumbo Karen Waters

Janice Lepizzera

Call to Order and Minutes

With a quorum present, Chair Steve Kitchen called the meeting to order at 8:10 AM and asked the members to review the minutes of the November 14, 2007 Board Meeting.

A motion was entered to approve the minutes of the November 14, 2007 WPGRI Board meeting. Board Member Joseph DesRoches noted a correction to the list of attendees, stating that Marie DeRoche's name was improperly worded in the minutes.

VOTE: Pat Talin moved to approve the minutes as amended. Joe Cannon seconded. All approved and the motion passed.

Chairman's Report

Chair Steve Kitchen introduced four new Board members: Nancy Roderick (from Concordia Manufacturing and representing the biotech industry); Alexis Devine (from Lifespan and representing

healthcare); Ray Pingitore (from Teamsters Local 251 and representing organized labor); and Alan Durand (from IBEW Local 99 and representing organized labor). He noted that the Board was at full capacity and welcomed all Board members to the meeting. Chair Steve Kitchen stated that a New Board Member Orientation would be held in February 2008.

Chair Steve Kitchen provided the Board with an update on WIA reauthorization. He stated that proposals had been submitted to Congress and that a nation-wide, \$250 million rescission was forthcoming.

Chair Steve Kitchen continued his report by discussing the Executive Director position and noted that the Director of the Department of Labor & Training was leaving to become Deputy Secretary of the Department of Health & Human Services and that Sandra Powell had been appointed Interim Director of DLT. Chair Steve Kitchen explained that he felt it would be difficult to post the Executive Director position for the Board during this period of downsizing and transition. He stated that at the January 8th meeting, the Executive Committee recommended that the Board vote to extend the term of Dottie Miller as Acting Executive Director under an “evergreen” agreement. The Chair read the text of the agreement:

The WPGRI will enter into a Memorandum of Agreement to continue Dottie Miller’s term as Acting Executive Director through an

evergreen agreement that will automatically renew on a monthly basis, indefinitely. The renewal can be ended or amended by either party with a thirty day notice at any time during this agreement.

Chair Steve Kitchen added that this agreement allowed the Board to remain flexible in its decision making process regarding this issue. He also noted that Dottie Miller had done an excellent job in the Acting Executive Director position and that the Executive Committee remained extremely pleased with her performance.

A motion was entered to approve the “evergreen” agreement.

VOTE: Pat Talin moved to approve. Joe Cannon seconded. All approved and the motion passed.

Following the vote, Board member Jane Nugent offered a friendly amendment that the agreement specifically name the parties involved. Vanessa Cooley asked about the possibility of moving Dottie Miller to permanent status. Chair Steve Kitchen answered that it was not possible at this time. Board member Bob Cooper asked for clarification regarding Dottie Miller’s status as a WPGRI Corporate employee and about the state’s oversight of the Executive Director position. Chair Steve Kitchen explained that the Executive Director position was intended to be a state position. Jane Nugent asked if the Department of Labor & Training knew about this “evergreen” agreement. Chair Steve Kitchen stated that the Department was aware

of the agreement.

Executive Director's Report

Dottie Miller thanked the Board for their vote of confidence, and then proceeded to update the Board regarding the corporate audit. She stated that staff was in the process of working with the auditors, KLR, to have a tangible update for the February Board meeting.

Dottie Miller introduced the WPGRI Budget as of November 30, 2007. She stated that this Budget would change once the WIA rescission had been finalized adding that the WIA Youth funds had been obligated for the current program year. She also stated that the H1-B Biotech Grant extension through June 2008 would allow partners to utilize unobligated funds on additional training efforts. Bob Cooper asked about the unobligated balance of Youth funds and Nick Ucci replied that carry-in money from the 2006 program year had been used to write contracts in 2007. Overall, Nick Ucci noted, the WIA Youth account had a positive unobligated balance.

Dottie Miller asked Nick Ucci to review WIA Performance statistics. Nick Ucci noted that the continued absence of WRIS data curtailed the WPGRI's ability to pass some of its Adult and Youth measures in the first quarter of the 2007 program year. He also explained that the failed performance measures for Older Youth was partially a result of a poor-performing contract which had been deobligated months earlier by the Board. He added that the results of that contract would

continue to negatively impact WIA performance for some time to come.

Dottie Miller noted that the H1B grant update had been detailed earlier in her report and that the One Stop Update would be explained under the Strategic Development Committee report.

Chair Steve Kitchen took a moment to report that Board member Mike Cassidy had agreed to become Chair of the Quality Assurance Committee following Richard Westlake's resignation. The Board thanked him for taking on this commitment.

Committee Reports

Strategic Development

Chair Paul Harden turned the floor over to Dottie Miller to detail the Industry Skill Development Initiative. Dottie Miller stated that the initiative focused on private sector- driven training; aligned the WPGRI's training efforts with high-growth sectors; and worked with the One-Stop System to create a comprehensive Workforce Development System for Adults similar to that developed for Youth. She noted that the initiative was based upon the successful H1B model where industry groups took the lead on designing and developing training. Dottie Miller went on to explain that the two Local Workforce Investment Boards – WPGRI and Workforce Solutions of Providence/Cranston – would administer the funding and

that the industry groups would take the programmatic lead. She explained that the proposal also included an upgrade in equipment and technology for the One-Stop Centers. She stated that the Local Boards would issue an RFP to engage industry partnerships for their involvement and services. Dottie Miller also explained that the Governor's Workforce Board's Strategic Investment Committee had recommended an investment of approximately \$1 million in the first year and that they had committed themselves to sustaining the project into the future. Chair Steve Kitchen asked if the proposal had a mechanism in place to fund staff-related costs and Dottie Miller answered that it did include monies to support staff costs.

A motion was entered to endorse the Industry Skill Development Initiative.

Chair Steve Kitchen took a moment to note that the Board would have a training session on conflict of interest and state ethics regulations at the February Board meeting.

Paul Harden asked about the section pertaining to partner coordination within the proposal and Dottie Miller stated that the Local Boards planned to connect to many partners in this process including the Career & Technical Schools, for example, in order to build the system. Vanessa Cooley suggested that the proposed initiative connect to all high schools, not just Career & Technical schools. It was noted that the proposal did include language linking

it to the educational system, including high schools. Jane Nugent offered that the United Way should be added as a partner, adding that a serious outcome measurement system should be considered as this proposal moves forward. Nancy Roderick stated that, as an H1B grant participant, it was a very beneficial experience and that the project had a number of outcome measurements. Dottie Miller added that some of those measurements may be helpful guidance as the proposal advances.

VOTE: Paul Harden moved to approve the endorsement of the proposal. Johan Uvin seconded. All approved and the motion passed. Kim Weiss recused herself from the vote.

Paul Harden continued his report and outlined a proposal from the two Local Boards on implementing customized training. He stated that under customized training, an employer or group of employers would develop training to address specialized workforce needs. He noted that this opportunity would allow the Board to identify and introduce occupational training that may not be currently offered. Paul explained that the program engaged employers who had jobs available in developing the training content and selecting training participants. Mike Cassidy asked if this was the first time the WPGRI had worked with the Providence/Cranston Local Board to implement customized training. Paul Harden stated that this was indeed a change, but that each Local would be responsible for their area clients.

Paul Harden also introduced an updated ETPL list for clients accessing ITA-funded training. Christine Grieco asked about ITA enrollment. Nick Ucci noted that enrollments in ITAs were down for several reasons, adding that one reason was that enrollment in training began late into the program year due to the unavailability of WIA funds. He noted that the Local Boards and the State Workforce Investment Office was working diligently to expedite the training certification process before the start of the new program year. He also stated that tuition for roughly sixty percent of the training programs on the list was above the current ITA cap of \$3,500. He explained that these concerns had led to the decision to include the ITA cap on the agenda of the January 18, 2008 Strategic Development Committee meeting.

Paul Harden completed his report by introducing new committee members Nancy Roderick, Everett Amaral, and Cynthia Farrell.

Youth Council

Chair Joe Cannon announced that the WPGRI received 41 proposals for the 2008 RFP for Youth Workforce programs. He recognized the hard work of the WPGRI Youth staff and noted that reading these proposals was an excellent way to learn about the Youth system from the bottom-up, not simply from the top-down. Joe Cannon also reviewed a December 11, 2007 meeting held by the Youth Council to address its strategic vision.

Chair Steve Kitchen stated that he wished to recommend Board members Andy Tyska, Scott Seaback, Everett Amaral, and Alexis Devine be appointed to the WPGRI Youth Council, as well as Alberto Deburgo, Director of Central Falls Family Self Sufficiency Program as a required representative of HUD.

A motion was entered to appoint these individuals to the WPGRI Youth Council.

VOTE: Joe Cannon moved to approve. Vanessa Cooley seconded. All approved and the motion passed.

Board Development

In the absence of Chair Paul Ouellette, Chair Steve Kitchen asked Dottie Miller to deliver the committee report. Dottie Miller noted that the Board member packets included a list of the current Board membership. She also stated that a New Board Member Orientation would be held on February 7, 2008 at 8 a.m., adding that the orientation would provide a synopsis of the Board and its work. She also explained that the previously scheduled February 5, 2008 Executive Committee meeting would be moved to February 7th, following the aforementioned orientation.

Chair Steve Kitchen noted that all Board and committee meetings were open to the public and suggested to new Board members that

they attend committee meetings to get a feel for the work being done. He urged those Board members not yet assigned to a committee to join one.

Old Business

Vanessa Cooley noted that her name was absent from the November 14, 2007 minutes, and that she was indeed in attendance.

A motion was entered to open the minutes for correction.

VOTE: Pat Talin moved to approve. Joe Cannon seconded. All approved and the motion passed.

A motion was entered to approve the minutes as amended.

VOTE: Pat Talin moved to approve. Joe Cannon seconded. All approved and the motion passed.

Chair Steve Kitchen issued a final reminder that recusal and ethics training would be held at the next Board meeting on February 12, 2008.

With no other business to be discussed, a motion was entered to adjourn the meeting.

VOTE: Joe DesRoches moved to approve. Vanessa Cooley seconded. All approved and the motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 AM.

**Respectfully submitted,
Nick Ucci**